

# NTT INDYCAR SERIES

## News Conference

Sunday, May 26, 2024

Indianapolis, Indiana, USA

**Josef Newgarden**

**Jonathan Diuguid**

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Wrapping up the 108th running of the Indianapolis 500 with the winning driver and strategist, as well.

Just a couple of deep dives on what happened today. There were 649 on-track passes for the Indy 500, most since 2017. 16 leaders, 49 lead changes. Josef Newgarden led 26 of the 200 laps, of course driver of the No. 2 Shell Powering Progress Team Penske Chevrolet; now a two-time Indianapolis 500 champion, back-to-back for the first time since Helio Castroneves did it back in 2001 and 2002.

And obviously for Team Penske it is a record-setting 20th win in the 500. Josef joins us, as does the strategist in Jonathan Diuguid, who joined Team Penske back in 2007. He's worked on the INDYCAR programs IMSA, ALMS programs, as well, and now gets to boast that he's an Indy 500 winner, as well.

Congratulations to both.

Josef, I don't know if you've had time to stop and think about what happened today, the 12 hours of Indy, but I'm guessing you're glad the race happened today.

JOSEF NEWGARDEN: I'm so throttled, you have no idea. I don't know that I'm going to be very articulate right now in this moment.

But I'm appreciative of this team. This team earned this win the entire month. They've earned it the entire year. You have no idea how much effort has gone into this. It's every individual. That is that Indy exemplifies. It exemplifies the team.

And to show it in qualifying, to show it in the race is a proud moment for everybody. I'm thankful Jonathan was here. I missed Tim, I missed Luke, but I was just as happy to have Jonathan and Raul. It was different but they're just as

good.

This team just has no shortage of excellence across the board. I would step into any one of these cars thankfully. You don't have to be on one program. They're all great. I think they all contributed to this win, so it was a big team day. Really just appreciative.

I enjoyed driving today. That's how I started this year. That's what I wanted to get back to, and very, very gratifying race to go through with this group.

**Q. The pass outside of Turn 3, your thoughts as you look back at that?**

JOSEF NEWGARDEN: Yeah, hard to know if it's going to work. I don't think it works unless you're racing someone like Pato. It's not that Pato didn't race me hard, he just raced me clean. That move doesn't work unless you're racing someone like that. It just doesn't. It's very easy that that doesn't work out.

So I think he's a tremendous champion. He could have easily won the race himself. He was very capable of that with his team. For us, it worked out. He drove me excellently. I'm very thankful for him and the way that he drove.

From our side, we left it all on the track. There was nothing that we were going to come home and regret. I definitely felt that way in the final. I'm like, we're going to put it all on the line. You have to if you want to win Indy. That's just the way it's got to be, especially nowadays.

It was enough. Our car was so fast, and it was pretty good. It was a little hairy at the end as far as the trickiness, but we had it all day as far as the commitment and the car and the team, and we laid it all out there in Turn 3.

**Q. Jonathan, for you, heck of a weekend, Pit Stop Challenge and then the win here today. How did this happen? Rate this.**

JONATHAN DIUGUID: Yeah, like Josef said, to be able to come in -- and this isn't my full-time job, as they say, to be able to come in and represent the team and the amount of

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work that went into showing up the way we showed up here. I think I've done Indy probably over 15 times, and this is the smoothest, easiest weekend as far as preparation. We showed and cars were fast out of the box, and when you're in a situation like that you can start to focus on the details.

Like Josef mentioned, the details are what got it done today. I was talking to Raul after the race and I said -- turned to him and said, Raul, I don't think we made any mistakes today. Might have made 50/50 decision one way or the other, but there was no mistakes, and that's what it takes to be in a position like we were at the end.

I think on the final restart there was an alternate strategy that came into play and we were cycled back in line. I think I said to Josef, you're going to have to do it the old fashioned way. Can't really help you out anymore. The old fashioned way is passing on track, and that's what we did, and there were some amazing restarts in addition to the pass on the outside of Turn 3 that everyone on the timing stand timing stopped looking at the television screens because we didn't know if we were going to come out the other side.

I think the confidence that Josef had in the car allows him to do that. And like he said, it was an excellent day on pit road. And with the help of Kevin and Mark the technician and Mustafa and the all guys. The preparation level for the race and the execution was second to none.

**Q. For as disjointed as last year's finish was with the red flags, this year really more than made up for that because it was just a straight-up fight all the way to the end. How satisfied are you to be able to win it like that?**

JOSEF NEWGARDEN: I thought they were both incredibly satisfying. That is what I would say. Very different races, but both hard fought and deserved as far as for our team and the effort that was put in, the car that was on track, the execution. I feel very similar about them.

Today was another excellent statement of that. Just to echo Jonathan again, it's every little detail piece has to -- you can't win this race on a whim. It rarely happens that way. There's no guarantees when you show up you're on the grid today and it's about getting every little detail right.

We didn't make mistakes today. We didn't make mistakes last year. I think the team deserved both of them. Really, really proud to be a part of it. You have no idea. I had so much fun working with this team. They did a great job.

**Q. 20th Indy 500 win for Roger and once again you get**

**your 30th victory. You get to celebrate that twice. How important are those numbers to you?**

JOSEF NEWGARDEN: They're very important. I think they're important to Roger. It's one of the things that I love about him is his vision to always be moving forward. I think some people, maybe it doesn't work for them, but you don't have the success and the integrity of someone like Roger Penske without that vision.

I have seen it personally over the last eight years. I have a tremendous amount of respect for him, and the numbers matter. I know how bad he wanted 20, and I can tell you I really wanted the second one, and this entire group wanted to win today.

I think they deserved to win today, and they care about winning these races. You have to. Why do we show up if we don't care about it? We care tremendously.

It means a lot, and glad to get back there.

**Q. You were already going to win over \$3 million with the victory, but the \$440,000 from Borg-Warner, that's a nice bonus. Just to be able to have that and more importantly the accomplishment of going back-to-back.**

JOSEF NEWGARDEN: Well, everybody on this team deserves a big bonus after today. Not even today, this month. Wow. I mean, I'm telling you, it's not -- this Indy, you can see the highs and lows of it so easily. You go up and you go down, and we've been down on the speed aspect the last four years and we've been fighting our way back as a group together.

Everybody has earned this one today, all year. It took a long time to get to this point. Yeah, it's cool.

**Q. Your celebration was identical to last year. In that moment emotionally, how was it similar to last year and how did it feel different?**

JOSEF NEWGARDEN: Oh, so similar. I genuinely mean that. It was very similar. You don't know that you're ever going to win this race. Of course you could dream about it. How could you not?

I've dreamed about winning this race for years, but you never know you're going to win it until you're winning it, and that's right before the line that you know you're winning it.

It's very spur of the moment, and I just wanted to get back to what we did last year and celebrating with this group so quickly was very gratifying.



**Q. What was your strategy for navigating the delay? I think everybody expected there would be one but didn't know where it would fall. Did you rest? Did you take a nap or anything like that?**

JOSEF NEWGARDEN: Yeah, it was pretty straight -- I'll let Jonathan answer this one because it's pretty straightforward from my side. I actually didn't really talk to these guys much, so I would be interested to hear his perspective on what the team was doing.

But I was pretty low key. I was just waiting basically for Jonathan to text me to say, hey, we're about to go.

JONATHAN DIUGUID: Yeah, because the name of the text group was Indy 500 Domination, right? So we did have a text group, but started on that. To be honest the communication about the weather delay was pretty clear, and they had a hard and fast line in the sand for time-wise. We knew there was plenty of time to get a full-distance race in, so we just executed the race plan that we had talked about on Saturday.

**Q. Is anything different when you're racing here later in the day? That's a lot later than you guys would normally have the car out there, whether it's temperature, whether it's shadows and light, whatever it was; did anything feel different?**

JOSEF NEWGARDEN: Yeah, definitely. Conditions are drastically different. We were talking all day, Jonathan and I, about it. He was keeping me up to date on track temp and ambient, and it really started to change the last 50 laps. It stayed pretty I would say stable up to that point, at least from my side, and then I could really tell a difference 50 to go.

It started rapidly cooling, mostly the track itself, and that brought a different balance. It actually brought a trickier balance to drive and I think just helped everybody gain a lot more grip.

It just made the battle even more fierce at the end because no one is really fading within a tire run. Everyone is just able to push flat out and stay pretty close.

So that's a difference to what a full daytime hot race would be.

**Q. Josef, when they handed you the bottle of milk, you took a couple of big swigs and then you reached for the phone, you FaceTimed someone, used some expletives. Who were you talking to there?**

JOSEF NEWGARDEN: That was Luke Mason on the phone. Someone gave me that and I saw him on there. It was good to see him.

**Q. You just wanted to celebrate and yell the F word a few times?**

JOSEF NEWGARDEN: Apologies for the F word.

**Q. We didn't hear it. We were just lip reading.**

JOSEF NEWGARDEN: Yep, yep, sorry about that. But no, it was great to see him. Great to see him.

**Q. Have can you talked to TC?**

JOSEF NEWGARDEN: I haven't. I look forward to it, but we're going to celebrate as a group tonight. I'll talk to him at some point soon.

**Q. On that late last lap pass when Pato got around you going into 1, you come out of 2 being able to follow him closely to make that run into 3. Was that a byproduct of the cooler track temperature or were you able to -- when did you notice you could follow that closely earlier in the race?**

JOSEF NEWGARDEN: Yeah, I did. I think we had that confidence for most of the month. It's a byproduct of an excellent race car.

I mean, look, I'm not going to take credit for being able to follow that closely. If the car can't do it, it can't do it. In oval racing you can't force these things. It's very much a team aspect.

That's why I say I think Indy magnifies that more than anywhere else we go. You have to have the race car just dialed perfectly to be able to do that stuff.

It has been really fun to drive all month. To Jonathan's point, it's been pretty simple. We've not really stepped outside of our box much. It was really well orchestrated and we just tried to hit our points and execute well. That was a byproduct of a great car.

**Q. If you get the chance to talk to Pato, because obviously he's kind of going through some things being runner-up here a few times, going through his own drought, if you will, like what you endured, what do you tell him?**

JOSEF NEWGARDEN: I would echo what I already said. He's a champion. He's one of the best competitors we have in this field. He's a really nice guy. Every time I talk

to Pato we have great conversations, and I think we have a lot of respect for each other.

I'm appreciative for the way that he drives. He drove like a champion in this race and he's just as deserving of a winner in my opinion. He definitely could have won this race. It's tough to not win it. I can't say anything to ease that for him. When you don't win, it hurts.

I've left here 11 times prior with a broken heart, so I know the feeling. Whether you're close or you're far, it's a broken heart. I can't ease that.

But he's a champion. I think he knows it. I definitely have a lot of respect for him.

**Q. Today Larson was up front until he had issues on pit road speeding. What was it like for you running around him? Did you notice him at all? He said he wants to come back and do this again. What are your thoughts on that?**

JOSEF NEWGARDEN: I think he should. He's a great driver. He's been a joy to have here this weekend. He's been great to talk to and work with as far as on track. I didn't see him much today. At least I didn't feel like I did.

There was alternate strategies going on, as Jonathan talked about, and I think he was in a different spot to us. I'm not surprised he wants to come back. I think it speaks volumes for the Indy 500 that he stayed.

It just shows the significance of this event, and I'm not surprised he wants to come back. I think it's great for the sport.

**Q. We've talked a bunch over the last 365 days; you're hungrier to come back this year to win again. You can go for three in a row next year. This is a busy week coming up for you. What is something you want to make sure you do that maybe you didn't get a chance to last year when you went to the victory week celebration, obviously going to New York? And then your cool-down lap seemed like you were still flying out there. Was that just an excitement level to get to and back into the stands?**

JOSEF NEWGARDEN: Yeah, it was a blur. It was so intense the last 30 laps that it was difficult to just shut that off. It was flat out. Like no one was lifting or giving anything up. I felt like I was wrecking half the time, and it looked like others were kind of the same way. It was just full on.

When I crossed the line, just shut the engines off; you're

still in full out mode. I think that's what you saw there. I just tried to process it very quickly, which is difficult to do in a minute, trying to get back to the start-finish line.

**Q. This week is obviously going to be a busy one. You turn around and go to Detroit and you've got media obligations. What's something you learned last year that you'll take in a little bit more?**

JOSEF NEWGARDEN: Yeah, I'm just going to try and be more measured with -- it's very tough. It sets you back from a commitment standpoint. You've got to go so many places. I'm someone that really needs personal time. I value that tremendously. I can't be in front of a lot of people for too long, and unfortunately that's like a big part of the job, especially if you win this race.

I'm going to try and honor my commitments and do a great job for the series and for this event, but I definitely need to measure it more than last year and find some time to get back into the season rhythm.

**Q. Josef, where does this one rank for you? Pato came in here and so did Scott talking about how they made moves during the race that could have put them in the wall or spun out. This race from a viewer's perspective was thrilling and exciting and you come out on top. Does this rank higher than any of your other wins you've had?**

JOSEF NEWGARDEN: Have you won this before?

JONATHAN DIUGUID: No.

JOSEF NEWGARDEN: I didn't know that. I thought Jonathan had one. I want him to answer this, too. It's very special. I'll repeat: it was tough not having my normal reality here this weekend, but I was just as excited to have Jonathan and Raul.

I think very highly of these two individuals, and I've seen them at various points in my career where I thought, hmm, maybe I'll have an opportunity to work with them full time on the INDYCAR side and it didn't work out. We've all gone on different career paths.

So it ranks -- the circumstances, the camaraderie, the time that we got to spend together out of chance, this wasn't supposed to happen and we got this opportunity out of chance, and to be able to pull it off together, it ranks very, very high for me. Very high. I don't know that I want to put it first on the list, but it seems like it probably would be first. It's really, really cool.

Think it's a good question for Jonathan, too. I didn't realize





he hadn't won it. It is right up there.

JONATHAN DIUGUID: Like Josef said, I've finished second a couple times with Helio when I was his engineer there. I know being so close and not being able to come over the finish line, so to be able to be a part of this group and represent a lot of hard work from other people, I feel a little bit guilty in the sense that I kind of showed up and everything was going smoothly and got the opportunity to be here.

But that's what it's like to be part of Team Penske. The opportunities exist on many fronts, and I think being able to be part of this today is definitely a high point in my career and look forward to more.

**Q. Earlier this month Roger Penske got his sports car victory out in Monterrey and you were on top of the timing stand for that. Today you get Mr. Penske his 20th Indy 500 win. Those are two pretty special accomplishments that you're involved in. How do you put that into perspective?**

JONATHAN DIUGUID: I think this year is probably going to go down as a dream year. This group also was part of the Daytona 24-hour win.

I talked a little about feeling guilty, and I think Josef said the same thing after the Daytona 24 hours. He kind of rocked up and we got the first win after many, many decades.

I think the biggest thing today we talked about in the race was qualifying on the front row. We could be on offense all day and I think that's what we were. We were on offense for the last 60 laps.

Josef did a good job saving fuel. We made strategy decisions to be in a good spot to be able to push hard for the last 60 laps, and I think that's what Josef talked about being worn out and tired he end of the race because it was flat out, no fuel saving and big push there.

**Q. Josef, a couple of times you win races, Mr. Penske has brought you ice cream, things like that at Texas. What did he say to you today? What was that moment like?**

JOSEF NEWGARDEN: He was the same RP. He's not changed. He was just -- look, he was happy for the group. When Roger sees everybody execute, there's nothing that makes him happier because that's what we preach. We try and work together as a team.

It is one team. He genuinely does it not care which car

wins the race, and I think oddly enough that is how a lot of individuals feel. Of course selfishly we want to win for each car, but when Roger sees us execute as a team and a car win the race and to do it through execution, he's very proud.

Like I said, I'm going to tell you, he's going to be on to No. 21 now. Everybody thought he wants 20 and that's his number, but like he's going to be, okay, how do we get to 21. He might even say something silly like we got to get to 25 or something.

I just love it. I love his mentality. We're always moving forward, and that's what I felt today.

**Q. Do you expect his parking space will be changed by the end of the night?**

JOSEF NEWGARDEN: It's probably already changed.

THE MODERATOR: I believe it has changed already, yeah.

JOSEF NEWGARDEN: I'd be surprised if it's not.

**Q. I remember you said on media day that you have the plan that you must be in the first position or the second one in order to win the race. How did you plan this part of the race? Jonathan said you already had something in strategy because you know the draft and all this kind of thing.**

JONATHAN DIUGUID: Yeah, I think obviously this race is run for over 100 years so you can look back at history on where people needed to be to be in a position to win the race. And like I said, with qualifying on the front row, we sort of controlled our own destiny all day.

We had conversations in the strategy meeting of from lap 0 to 100, we're okay with dropping back to seventh or eighth to save fuel and hit these targets. As we get close to the end of the race we want to be in the top 3 because that's the only way you don't, A, get caught up in somebody else's mess or control your own destiny, like Josef said.

I think with 40 laps to go, we were in the group there, and I think that the communication is now it's time to do your homework. What I meant by that was learn how to pass, learn how to get the runs, learn how to manage the draft, and learn how to manage the fuel, because it's all going to all-out blast for the last 15 laps, which is what happened.

It takes all the learning from not just this race but previous races to be able to apply that and execute. Restarts like Josef had on the last restart, I think it was three wide into

Turn 1, which never really ends up very well, but in that case I think we picked up four spots and put us back into contention, and then the pass on the last lap in Turn 3 there.

Just being at the front all day is really important because that's what it's going to come down to, and that's what our focus was.

**Q. What lesson did you learn from the St. Pete race that will help you through the year?**

JOSEF NEWGARDEN: Hmm, lessons. In an odd way, I think it's a very -- I'm grateful for the experience. I think it's good. It's been a very illuminating experience to me, more from the outside world.

I know what I take from that personally. I know what it showed me, which I'm thankful for. I think it shows you things that maybe weren't fully clear but are very clear now.

I think it's an experience that it's got to either break you or tough you up, and for me, that's all I'll say about it. We've been moving forward. We've never worked together more as a group than this weekend, and I thought that was difficult to do.

This is the most tight-knit team I've ever seen. It's been a pleasure to be a part of it because it's such a well-conjoined group. Everybody works so well together. It's fun to show up here. It's fun to go to work.

I've never had it better than this month. Excited to go forward. We've had a really good time this month.

**Q. 30 years ago Al Unser, Jr., made the statement that in the final laps of a race when you're contending, et cetera, the only thing in his mind that mattered was winning, trying to figure out a way to win. That doesn't mean necessarily be reckless but put it out there, hang it out on the line. When did you notice coming up that you had that ability and did you feel that today of whatever it took?**

JOSEF NEWGARDEN: Yes, definitely. I thought I misstepped a little bit. The team with me was really, really in step with what was going on and giving me all the right information. And then it comes down to trying to make the right moves at the right time, and I think I misstepped a little bit to be honest after probably lap 130, 140, and then there was a little bit of a recovery mode to that.

Two parts to the question is when we showed up we felt like we had a race-winning car. It was very evident I think to all of us. It was evident to me and I think the team could

see it, and we were trying to put the pieces together correctly and not misstep, and then in the race it was the exact same deal.

I radioed in that this is the car. We're not going to lose this race because of the car. We're going to lose it if we don't do the job correctly, and everybody did the job correctly today, and I think that's why it was pulled off.

**Q. When you're watching him do it out there on the track, it's in his hands the last 20 or so laps, what is that like and what does that tell you about him one more time what he's made of?**

JONATHAN DIUGUID: Yeah, I think I said something in the timing stand, this is the fun part because we can just sit back and be race fans and watch, and to sort of see what happened for those last 20 laps was amazing. The crowd that was here today, to get to see the moves that were happening in Turn 1 on the restarts and then in the last lap, it's definitely going to be an iconic race and one that'll be replayed many times because it was nonstop action. There's a high stress level and everything, but we did our last pit stop, we had enough fuel to push flat out the whole time, so to be honest, we were just race fans at that point and just feeding the information that Josef needed about what was happening around him and then just watching him go to work.

**Q. There's the Borg-Warner bonus that you now know about. This is the first back-to-back since Helio did it some 22 years ago. Your thoughts on how rare a feat like that is and how special that is.**

JOSEF NEWGARDEN: You know, someone had to reset the bank, and I guess we did. But no, it was great.

I've said this a couple times before I got up here, but I had let go of the thought of winning this race last year. It's so difficult to win. There is no guarantees. It doesn't matter how good you are or how well you execute. It does not guarantee a victory at Indianapolis ever.

Last year I really started focusing on just the opportunity and saying, you know, this is so fun that we get to show up here and we've got great cars, we've got a great crew, and we have an opportunity to win the race. I know we did. I know we did last year, and I definitely know we did this year. I focused on that. I said if we win it, that's great, but it's the opportunity that's the joy of it.

I say that because it is very difficult to win the race. It's very difficult to win it back-to-back. I'm over the moon. I've got no words for what we've been able to do. I'm really proud of this team. They deserve it.

